STATEMENT
by H.E. Akan Rakhmetullin,
Chairman of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons at the opening plenary meeting
(22 July 2024, Geneva)

Madam High Representative,
Excellences,
Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons for entrusting me with this important duty of chairing the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference.

I assure you of my fullest commitment to implementing this critical mandate to advance the common objectives and goals of the NPT which is the cornerstone of global disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

I would like to equally thank Ambassador Jarmo Viinanen of Finland, the Chair of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for taking up the necessary work in the current challenging circumstances and setting the stage for this review cycle.

Dear colleagues,

As we gather here today, the global state of affairs remains fragile and unpredictable.
In stark contrast to previous decades, we are witnessing the erosion of many important international security arrangements in conjunction with a glaring absence of confidence-building measures.

The Conference on Disarmament has been in a deadlock over the last decades, while other components of the disarmament machinery are also hindered by political grievances.

Such conditions unavoidably have an effect on the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime by creating unprecedented challenges that demand innovative thinking and flexibility from all its parties.

Among the most pressing issues facing the NPT are the lack of tangible progress in disarmament and increasing pressure on the global non-proliferation regime.

The rift between nuclear-weapon-States and non-nuclear-weapon States is deepening with every passing year.

Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that many delegations have looked for progress outside the traditional fora, as seen in their efforts to elaborate additional disarmament instruments.

Despite these challenges, the NPT remains the key universal instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Therefore, it is our collective duty to support the Treaty’s implementation ensuring that it stays fit for purpose in the current turbulent environment.

**Excellences,**

As we find ourselves at the mid-point of preparations for the 2026 Review Conference, it is vital to take stock of
progress in implementing the outcomes of the previous milestone Review Conferences.

First and foremost, we must still aim for full implementation of our past commitments across all three pillars, including the 1995 decisions, 2000 Review Conference outcome as well as the 2010 Action plan.

At the same time, the persisting need to establish a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East remains of equal importance in this cycle.

**Dear colleagues,**

As representatives of the countries that signed the NPT, we all remember the very first lines of the Treaty’s text proclaiming “to make every effort to avert the danger of a nuclear war”.

As much as it troubles me to state this, every step should be taken to avert a new nuclear arms race that could potentially be unleashed upon the world.

Any nuclear conflict will bring about the total destruction of the human civilization.

Catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences witnessed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as from nuclear tests in Semipalatinsk and the Pacific and other nuclear test sites around the globe have proven that effects of any use of nuclear weapons are beyond human control.

In this context, it is imperative to seek the earliest ratification and universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.
As we navigate the path towards the ultimate goal of the NPT – achieving a world free from nuclear arms – we can equally work together to deter the use of nuclear weapons through various risk reduction tools as well as transparency, confidence and security-building measures.

The past and current review cycles demonstrate increasing demand for greater accountability and transparency – a key issue that takes on greater importance amidst dangerous trends in the security doctrines and military postures of nuclear-weapons States.

Today, new developments in science, outer space, cyber technologies, missile defenses and hypersonic delivery systems generate new complexities. The increased applications of artificial intelligence in our lives adds to even greater uncertainties.

None of these newly emerging developments could be predicted more than 50 years ago. However, it is in our direct responsibility and ability to reinforce the NPT in face of these new challenges.

**Dear colleagues,**

The Treaty’s regular work of enhancing nuclear safeguards and ensuring access to the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy remains strong and of immense value.

While the preparatory committees and review conferences are technical events by nature and have primarily fulfilled their general function, we still need to reverse the negative trend of the last two RevCons.
My chairmanship will steadfastly aim for all these objectives, and stands ready to work with members of the Bureau and all delegations to further strengthen the review process.

Therefore, as Chair of the second PrepCom, I will seek a balanced approach and give an adequate consideration of the Treaty’s three main pillars.

Despite the escalating threats, the unfortunate standstill and factionism in multilateral disarmament bodies, I am still looking ahead with hope and optimism that collectively we can uphold the unique status of this Treaty which was designed to advance our common goals of ensuring a safer and secure world.

Excellences,

It is a crucial moment for us to harness our collective will to ensure that the Treaty remains effective in its ultimate goal of pursuing a world free of nuclear weapons.

As we begin our deliberations today, I intend to remain true to the driving principles of this PrepCom’s chairmanship – inclusivity, transparency and openness.

I hope this session will serve as an opportunity to collectively shape the discourse and set the agenda for a successful review cycle as we chart the path towards 2026.

I thank you for your attention and I wish all of us productive work ahead.